

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the above application. By the above amendment, claims 11-15 have been added.

The Office Action dated December 29, 2006, has been received and carefully reviewed. In that Office Action, claims 4-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In addition, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Choi, and claims 1-3, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saito. Claims 4-6 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of Okuda, and claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito and Okuda and further in view of Choi. Each of these issues is addressed below, and reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-10 and examination and allowance of claims 1-15 is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Claims 4-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. By the above amendment, claim 4 has been amended to recite a plasma generating device to address this rejection. The withdrawal of the rejection of claims 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is therefore respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Choi. Claim 1 as amended recites a controller controlling a post-processing gas supply system to supply post-processing gas to a reaction container after a cleaning gas is supplied to the container and before a substrate is placed in the container. Choi in no manner shows or suggests a controller for supplying post-processing gas to a reaction container as recited by amended claim 1, and claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over Choi.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saito. Claim 1 as

amended requires a controller controlling a post-processing gas supply system to supply post-processing gas, comprising all reaction gases used when a substrate is processed, to the reaction container. Saito does not show or suggest a controller for supplying all reaction gases used when a substrate is processed to a reaction container as recited in amended claim 1. Claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over Saito for at least this reason.

Claims 2-7 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saito. Claim 8 recites a substrate processing apparatus that includes, inter alia, a control apparatus for supplying a cleaning gas from a supply nozzle into a reaction container at a time of cleaning, and alternately supplying all reaction gases used for processing into the reaction container after the cleaning gas is supplied and before a substrate is processed. Saito does not show or suggest at least the step of alternately supplying all reaction gases used for processing into the reaction container after the cleaning gas is supplied and before the substrate is processed as recited in claim 8. Claim 8 is submitted to be allowable over Saito for at least this reason.

Claims 9 and 10 depend from claim 8 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 8.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of Okuda. Claims 4-6 depend from claim 1. Okuda does not address the shortcomings of Saito discussed above in connection with claim 1. Claims 4-6 are therefore submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of Okuda. Claim 10 depends from claim 8. Okuda does not address the shortcomings of Saito discussed above in connection with claim 8. Claim 10 is therefore submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 8.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito and Okuda and further in view of Choi. Claim 7 depends from claim 1. Okuda and Choi do not

address the shortcomings of Saito discussed above in connection with claim 1. Claim 7 is therefore submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

NEW CLAIMS

New claim 11 recites a substrate processing method that includes steps of subjecting a substrate to a desired processing using a first reaction gas and a second reaction gas, removing the processed substrate from the reaction container, supplying a cleaning gas to the reaction container and exhausting the cleaning gas from the reaction container. Then, before processing an additional substrate, claim 11 recites supplying the first reaction gas to the reaction container, exhausting the first reaction gas from the reaction container, and supplying the second reaction gas to the reaction container. The references of record do not show or suggest the method recited in claim 11, and claim 11 and its dependent claims 12-14 are submitted to be allowable over the art of record for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

Each issue raised in the Office Action dated December 29, 2006, has been addressed, and it is believed that claims 1-15 are now in condition for allowance. Wherefore, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-11 and examination and allowance of claims 11-15 is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

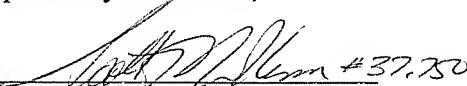
Application No. 10/529,896
Amendment dated June 21, 2007
Reply to Office Action of December 29, 2006

Docket No.: 1592-0201PUS1

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: June 21, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By  #37,750
Michael K. Mutter
Registration No.: 29,680
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant